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GRADUATE SCHOOL

Newsletter

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April 19, 1966

GOVERNMENT SERIAL RECORDS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 3

Faculty Luncheon -- "Equality Under Law"
David Reich, Lawyer

PROGRAM ON PROGRAMMED LEARNING

Programmed learning was the subject of lively discussion by the near-capacity crowd at our April faculty luncheon.

The discussion was sparked--and led--by our guest speaker, Dr. Allen Calvin, president of the Behavioral Research Laboratories, Palo Alto, California. He has devoted the past 12 years to research on and development of programmed learning materials.



Some 4,000 school systems--and more than one million students--are now using the materials developed by his organization, Dr. Calvin reported. The Laboratories also prepared programmed materials for use by the Job Corps.

For basic information on programmed learning, he referred the audience to two publications issued by the Government Printing Office, "The Research on Programmed Instruction" and "The Use of Programmed Instruction in Public Schools."

Dr. Calvin said that programmed instruction is not a panacea but a tool for teachers--basically a better way of teaching, if properly used.

He described programmed instruction as a system of breaking information down into small steps--writing it in very simple language--and presenting it in carefully sequenced manner so that there are no gaps in understanding. Each step--or paragraph--contains a question which the student must answer before moving on to the next step, so that he is systematically tested to see if he is learning. In this way, it is possible to tell where a student has trouble and to help him at that point.

"Programmed instruction is a tool to get across basic facts," Dr. Calvin pointed out. "It must be used along with other teaching techniques--it is a basis for interaction between teacher and students."

Not every subject can be programmed, however, the speaker said. He reported that the Behavioral Research Laboratories have not been able to develop a program on English composition nor on how to tell time. They are still working on developing a program on accounting. But they have developed programs for many subjects, including languages, American government, economics, mathematics, biology, logic, grammar, geography, health, statistics, engineering statics, and chemistry--the course used by the Graduate School. The State Department and the Armed Forces are using some programmed instruction in teaching languages. (Our own Dr. Michael J. Pallansch of ARS, is presently teaching his second course in chemistry using programmed texts developed by the Behavioral Research Laboratories. We are confident that he would be happy to share his experiences with any of his fellow teachers.)

Dr. Calvin invited those associated with the Graduate School to visit the Palo Alto center if they have the opportunity, and if they wish information about the programs developed there to write to the Behavioral Research Laboratories, Box 577, Palo Alto, California.

Faculty and committee members are also invited to visit our Modern Learning Center where we have many of Dr. Calvin's materials on display. Contact Dee Henderson, of our staff, who is in charge of this Center (DU 8-6693).

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GOOD TEACHING

A recent editorial in Science reviews the question of what makes a good teacher--especially in light of the current emphasis on research and publication.

"Before you decide whether a teacher is good," advises the editorial, written by Warren Weaver, of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, "ask, good for what?"

The purposes should vary greatly, from the broad intent of survey courses to the stimulating depth of graduate courses. Is the criterion of goodness the mechanical success with which information is transmitted, the sympathy and warmth with which a young mind is led to unfold--or the influence a great character can have on the whole life of a student?

"I do not think a teacher can be judged by weighing publications, but I also think no teacher can be successful unless he is alert to the new knowledge in his field. In many instances it is absurd to expect a teacher to be a scholarly producer of original research; but is fatal not to require him to be alive to his subject."

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FACULTY NOTES

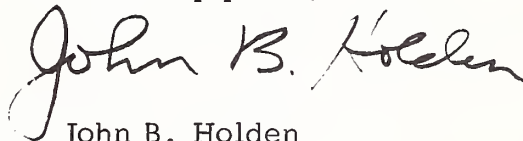
Denis F. Johnston, a Graduate School instructor in social sciences, has been awarded one of the Secretary of Labor's Career Service Awards. This award, he says, will permit him to undertake a study of general-purpose manpower projections, aimed at describing their main types, methods of construction, uses, and limitations. He adds that his study findings "will be used in developing tentative guidelines for the preparation of manpower projections and clarifying their assumptions, uses, methodology, and reliability."

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NEW HOURS

The regular hours of our Bookstore, throughout the semester, will be from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and from 4:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "John B. Holden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being the most prominent.

John B. Holden
Director

P. S. Dr. Mary Louise Collings has developed a preliminary draft of a handbook for Graduate School teachers. If you would like to review a copy, call Mrs. Thayer (DU 8-6337).

